



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Activities, Methods and Principles of German Clubs in American Colleges.

By **Heinrich Keidel, Ph. D.**, Instructor at Ohio State University, Columbus, O.

I.

With the probable exception of its autocratic administration, the American college as a rule endeavors to be the true image of a live community and thereby offers features that one hardly will find in educational institutions of other countries. Student-papers, theaters, dances, vaudeville-shows, scientific and social clubs render doubtlessly as valuable service in producing good citizenship, as on the other hand through their apparent display of superficiality they are detrimental to the scientific education of the individual student. For, science in the largest sense demands isolation and vigorous mental concentration, while club-meetings stimulate only those nerves that have become tired from work, encourage the beginners. For the advancement of teaching-methods, therefore, it is important to investigate what kind of work in various college-clubs has been done and where their advantages and disadvantages lie.

Through my own activity in German clubs, I have been led to an investigation that resulted in 45 answers to 60 letters of inquiry. Scant as the material is, it is sufficient to give a good idea of the activities of German clubs, for doubtless all types of clubs are represented in this report.

The *purpose* of the German clubs is everywhere the same "to promote and foster a live interest in German language, literature and art." (Mo.) Since, however, these ideals are almost identical with those of classroom-work, some add, that they "try to bring together socially the students of German" (U. of Cincinnati), nay, some are more courageous in cultivating "German spirit in the college life" (Barnard). Certainly the highest ambition is shown by Cornell, whose club tries "to promote mutual understanding and a spirit of friendship between Germans and Americans; to preserve and cultivate what is best in German civilization and character and devote it to the best interests of the American people; to increase the feeling of solidarity in the German element of the United States; never to pursue aims which run counter to good citizenship; to further social intercourse

* Note. For the technical compilation of the material I am deeply indebted to the excellent work of Miss Bertha Hoborn, Dayton, O. I regret to say, that many German clubs of well known colleges and universities did not answer my letters at all, whereas others handed in splendid and elaborate reports, for which I extend my thanks.

among the members and to entertain harmonious relations with other clubs; in pursuance of the above named objects, to found additional similar clubs at other universities." Nowhere else have I found such high aims, nowhere such frankness in emphasizing the missionary character of the organization. To be sure this club was founded so to speak for war purposes. The old Deutscher Verein felt intensely that they needed lectures upon the war and in order to keep the university neutral they founded this German club off the campus, but for students only. The old Deutscher Verein has not been dissolved; it continues its old peaceful purpose "to foster the knowledge of German language, literature and life and to cultivate friendly relations among the students."

The furtherance of the spoken German language lies close to the heart of almost every society, i. e. "opportunity for conversation" (Neb.). So in most of the clubs German is used, by a few even in strict business meetings. A splendid list of parliamentary expressions for German clubs has been recently published by Carl Osthaus (Monatshefte für Deutsche Sprache und Pädagogik, XVI, 5). Cornell has printed 60 expressions in its constitution. In Barnard College the foreign language is not used, because the club is "not scientific, but only social". This seems somewhat strange, because constitution and report show an extraordinary enthusiasm; moreover, the girls gather weekly for 15 minutes to sing their Volkslieder.

So far as *the names* of the clubs are concerned, uniformity is of rare occurrence. "Deutscher Verein" is used very frequently. Some are named "Germanistische or Deutsche Gesellschaft", "Deutscher Kreis", "Deutscher Geselliger Verein", "Deutscher Schauspielverein", "Verein Gemütlichkeit", "Conversation Club", "Germanic Society". Here we must mention that the University of California has besides a Deutscher Verein five other clubs, whose names are: Plaudertasche, Conversations-Club, Deutscher Zirkel, Sprechverband, Deutsches Kränzchen.

In *general plan* the clubs are very dissimilar. So far as I know, the O. S. U. (Ohio State University) D. V. is the only club deliberately modeled after another club, namely the Wisconsin society. Apart from the spirit of the respective institutions the decisive causes of dissimilarity are the number of students, the personalities and the density of population of German descent.

We must distinguish two kinds of clubs. First: those which admit only teachers and students; second: those which admit everybody. A few only make slight distinctions between student and citizen-members. But in all of them students and teachers are in the overwhelming majority and determine the spirit of the club.

In a very different way the various societies try to attain common aims. Often stress is laid exclusively upon conversation, and only advanced stud-

ents are admitted, like Stanford, Holyoke, North Carolina, Oberlin (in groups of eight each), some clubs of California. The Schauspielverein of Nebraska on the other hand cultivates the drama only, the "Germanic Society" of John Hopkins fosters "learned studies among the graduate students". The Germanistische Gesellschaft of Wisconsin has two strictly separate divisions, namely the general social meetings and the scientific division. To the last one only faculty members and very advanced students are admitted. Besides, once a week a conversation meeting is held in the afternoon, at which tea is served, not as an attraction but as a psychological help to the carrying on of an informal chat in German.

Most of the clubs, however, meet in the evening only, when according to mood and opportunity conversation, theatricals, recitations and music are favored. The German Lied and music hold the place of honor on the programs. Brown even has a mixed quartette and a male quartette. Often a lecture is given, games are played, poems are recited, in short, everything is done to enrich the intellectuall "Lebensgefühl" by means of German spirit. Vermont reports that the meetings are similar to German "Commerce" without beer. Kansas meets once a week in the afternoon. Often Goethe, Schiller, Hauptmann evenings are given. One program of Oregon is to be recommended for imitation: Wilhelm Tell Evening. Students read reports about origin of Tell, action of the drama, the classical dramas of Schiller, criticisms and discussions about Tell; then follow the presentation of some scenes by students. Occasionally the clubs arrange a dance, but they fail to report whether they use the German way of dancing.

The Barnard activities are rather complicated; their meetings consist of four kinds: 1. Two regular meetings each year. 2. Special meetings ordered by the president. 3. Social meetings every six weeks, of which two should be: 4. Open meetings. In these only non-members are allowed to give addresses.

Cornell once held debates in German. In 1905-06 and 1906-07 different college problems were discussed, but apparently the plan has been dropped since. Prize-contests were also offered. One prize for a paper on Schiller was not given, however, while one was awarded for a Possenspiel to Mr. Loewe.

Classification of the clubs based on the kind of membership has been made above, namely into two groups. The first we may call the student and teacher group. The membership then, except for the teachers, who always are admitted, is as follows: at John Hopkins graduates only are eligible. Syracuse admits students who have taken a three years course in German and have had the grades A and B. Stanford takes students majoring in German and introduced by members. Cincinnati admits advanced students, recommended by the faculty and accepted by the majority. Barnard: students who have taken German one year. To the Plaudertasche only

good students are elected. Conversation Club (Cal.) : every German speaking student. Oregon : students who have taken a two years' course in German. Holyoke : advanced students. Vermont : anyone who has studied at least one semester at any college and received the grade B. Cornell (G. C.) takes every male student. Other people (University or resident) are elected as associate members (D. V. and G. C.).

The *number of members* in this group for the year 1914-15 can be seen from the following list : Syracuse, 125 ; Indiana, 60 (limited) ; Cincinnati, 50 ; Kansas, 50 ; Cornell, (G. C.) 47 ; Stanford, 25 (limited) ; Plaudertasche, 23 ; North Carolina, 10 ; Wittenberg, 25 (limited).

The second group consists of those clubs that do not limit the membership to students and teachers. It might be possible, however, that some of these clubs belong to the first class, for the material sent in was often so scant in that respect that in some cases I had to resort to guesswork. This is the list for 1914-15 : Wisconsin, 250 ; Vassar, 150 ; Ohio State, 97 ; Brown, 56 ; Northwestern, 50 ; Sprechverband (Cal.), 50 ; Deutscher Verein (Cal.), 50 (limited) ; Illinois, 50 ; Colorado, 43 ; Nebraska (Schauspielverein), 43 ; Conversation Club (Cal.), 40 (limited) ; Oregon, 40 (limited) ; Minnesota, 35 ; Grinnell, 30 ; Nebraska (Geselliger Verein), 30.

The *dues* are generally small. Ohio State, Northwestern, Nebraska, Oregon, Wisconsin, Barnard ask 25 cents a semester. Indiana, Missouri 75 cents a year ; Brown, Minnesota, Syracuse, Cincinnati, California, 50 cents ; Williams, 55 cents. An introduction fee must be paid : in Minnesota, \$2, and in Nebraska, 25 cents. In Cornell (G. C.) the admission fee of \$2.00 seems to be the only contribution without any limit as to time ; this results in dependence upon voluntary contributions, which seem to be given extremely generously according to the last annual report. The D. V. mentions dues but does not state the amount.

In general the *discipline* is extremely lax. Barnard reports that every absence from a meeting is fined 10 cents. Oregon's rule is that every member has to appear on the program at least once a year. Violation of this rule is fined 50 cents. Williams dismisses a member after four absences, Minnesota after three. This is the strictest rule reported and the humor of it is that it comes from the "Verein Gemütlichkeit".

Little information could be obtained in regard to *the age* of the clubs. Harvard was founded in 1884, Smith in 1901, Cornell (D. V.) in 1903, Wisconsin in 1897, the Plaudertasche, 1905. Only Cornell has had a member, Mr. Ch. P. Giessing, write a history of the club, whereas in Harvard such a thing apparently does not exist. But it must be considered that most of the clubs have changed their names and constitutions very frequently. Indeed, often for long intervals, no meetings have been held. This is especially the case where the club-management is placed entirely in the hands of the students. Grinnell (Iowa) for instance had 30 members

in 1913-14, while the next year the club was dissolved, since the students themselves were averse to it.

As far as the *theatrical performances* are concerned, they ought to form a chapter for themselves, because they are almost the only occasions in which the clubs step into the limelight of publicity. Accordingly dramatics are the phase of club life in which the students take the most pride. Small clubs often devote their whole time to the preparation of a play, the performance of which becomes a social event in the community.

(To be concluded.)

Berichte und Notizen.

I. Das Französische Gymnasium in Berlin.

Einem Bericht aus No. 6 der Schweizerischen Lehrerzeitung entnehmen wir das folgende, das in mehr als einer Hinsicht auch für unsere Leser Interesse haben wird:

„Ein eigentlich rührendes Kulturdokument ist der Jahresbericht eines Berliner Gymnasiums, den uns ein freundlicher Zufall eben auf den Tisch legt. Schon der Titel sieht seltsam genug aus: „Programme des cours du *Collège royal français*. Rapport historique et statistique de l'année scolaire 1914/15. Berlin, Imprimerie A. Haack“. Nicht um eine private, etwa von der französischen Kolonie unterhaltene Anstalt handelt es sich also, sondern um eine staatliche Schule, die sich der besonderen Gunst des Königs von Preussen rühmen darf, und die Zöglinge sind mit ganz wenigen Ausnahmen nicht etwa Landesfremde, sondern nach Nam' und Art waschechte Deutsche! Als offizielle Schulsprache herrscht in diesem königlich preussischen Gymnasium nicht das Deutsche, sondern das Französische: der Jahresbericht ist französisch geschrieben; der fremdsprachliche Unterricht beginnt in Sexta mit acht Stunden Französisch, statt mit Latein, das erst in Untertertia, aber dafür mit hoher Stundenzahl einsetzt, und in den mittleren und oberen Klassen wird der Unterricht in zwei Dritteln aller Stunden in französischer Sprache erteilt.

„Der von dem damaligen Direktor G. Schulze zum 200. Geburtstag der Schule verfasste „Bericht über das Königl. Französische Gymnasium in den Jahren 1689 bis 1889“ erklärt diese merkwürdige Tatsache; er bildet überhaupt einen interessanten Beitrag zur Geschichte des deutschen Mittelschulunterrichts. Die Gründung eines Gymnasiums für die Kinder der französischen Protestanten, die nach der Aufhebung des Edikts von Nantes in Norddeutschland und vor allem in Berlin eine neue Heimat gefunden hatten, war die notwendige Folge des vom Grossen Kurfürsten am 29. Oktober 1685 erlassenen Potsdamer Ediktes, das auch den Nachkommen der Refugiés das Anrecht auf französische Predigt und französischen Urteilspruch vor Gericht garantierte hatte. Die Vorliebe für die französische Sprache, die der Grosse Kurfürst und seine Nachfolger zeigten, begünstigte das Unternehmen; als Muster dienten die höheren Lehranstalten, die die Einwanderer in ihrer alten Heimat ins Leben gerufen hatten, und an tüchtigen Lehrkräften konnte es in der Umgebung eines Hofes, der ganz im